

Program Support Conference — A Successful Integration

by Ms. Dianne Ryder, Public Affairs Assistant, DCMA Headquarters

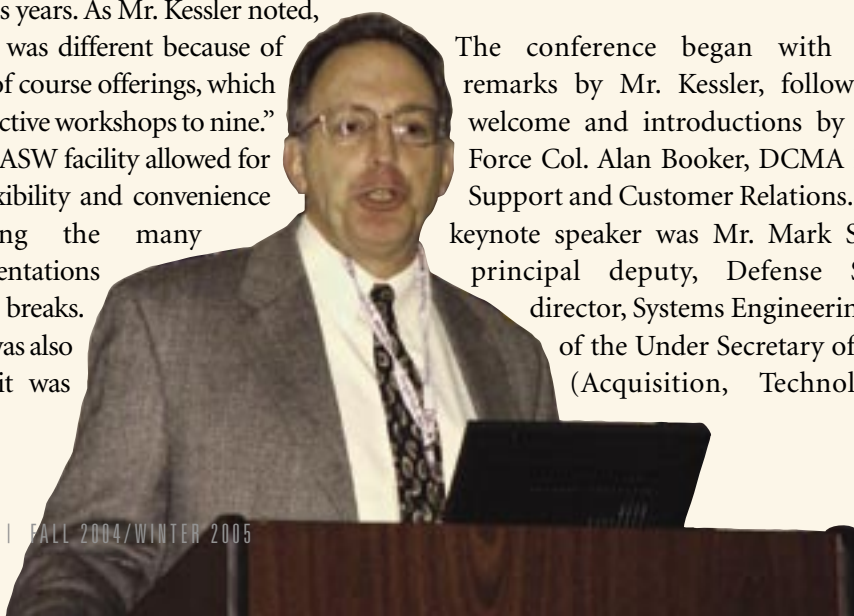
The first-ever DCMA Program Support Conference, which was held June 8 - 10, 2004, at the Fleet Anti-Submarine Warfare (FASW) Training Center in Point Loma, San Diego, Calif., boasted 420-plus attendees – over 150 more than initially anticipated. The program was a joint venture between DCMA's Program Integration (PI) and Contract Operations (OC), a merger borne out of a "funding challenge," according to conference manager Mr. Eric Kessler, DCMA Headquarters Engineering Group.

With both PI and OC personnel attending the conference, the format of the event had to be carefully considered to appeal to this wider audience. The goal was to provide a forum to discuss ideas and customer input and to benefit from the expertise of those in the field and the invited guests. The conference included more course offerings this year than conferences hosted by OC in previous years. As Mr. Kessler noted, "This conference was different because of the broad menu of course offerings, which grew from five elective workshops to nine." Fortunately, the FASW facility allowed for the necessary flexibility and convenience for coordinating the many workshops, presentations and networking breaks. This conference was also unique in that it was



highly focused on the customer and included the incorporation of DCMA Director Maj. Gen. Darryl A. Scott's and DCMA Deputy Director Mrs. Sallie Flavin's concerns with Knowledge Management (KM) and Communities of Practice (CoP). Said Mr. Kessler, "This was the first DCMA conference that established a CoP for the conference itself and integrated KM issues into DCMA workshop topics."

The conference began with opening remarks by Mr. Kessler, followed by a welcome and introductions by U.S. Air Force Col. Alan Booker, DCMA Program Support and Customer Relations. The first keynote speaker was Mr. Mark Schaeffer, principal deputy, Defense Systems/director, Systems Engineering, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology, &



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Logistics) followed by Mr. Paul Solomon, manager, Earned Value Management Systems, Northrop Grumman Corporation and Software Engineering Institute. DCMA's own Mrs. Flavin and Mr. Bob Schmitt, executive director for Contract Management Operations, conveyed the headquarters perspective on transformation and contract management operations insight, respectively. Other guest speakers included Mr. Tony Parasida, vice president, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems, Program Management and Independent Review, and Mr. Brian Willoughby, president, WILLCOR, Inc. and the industry director for Best Manufacturing Practices Center of Excellence (BMPCOE). A customer panel focusing on Joint Strike Fighter (F-35), DD(X) Transformational Systems and Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command (SPAWAR) was also held.



Topics covered in the workshops were:

- *Capability Maturity Model, Integrated (CMMI)*
Briefed by: Ms. Kathy Lundeen, DCMA Headquarters; Mr. Larry Tomenga, DCMA Dallas; Ms. C. G. Lindsay, DCMA Lockheed Martin Orlando; and Mr. Charles Bush, DCMA Lockheed Martin Denver.
- *Measures*
Presented by: Mr. Guy Mercurio, DCMA Boston; Mr. Steve Martinez, DCMA Headquarters; and Mr. John Eget, DCMA General Dynamics.

(Above) Keynote speaker, Mr. Mark Schaeffer, principal deputy, Defense Systems/director, Systems Engineering, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense.

(Opposite - Top) Mr. Brian Willoughby, WILLCOR, Inc. president and the industry director for Best Manufacturing Practices Center of Excellence (BMPCOE).

(Opposite - Bottom) Mr. Paul Solomon of Northrop Grumman Corporation and Software Engineering Institute.

- *Program Surveillance Strategy*
Presented by: Mr. John Twohy, DCMA Headquarters, and Ms. Cynthia Seiter, DCMA Headquarters Earned Value.
- *Integrated Master Schedule*
Presented by: Ms. Karen Urschel, DCMA District East, and Mr. Jeff Tallmadge, DCMA Lockheed Martin Denver.
- *Manufacturing Work Products*
Presented by: Mr. John Gelsomini, DCMA Raytheon Mass.; Ms. Jane Thompson, DCMA Headquarters; and Mr. Marty Makielski, DCMA Chicago.
- *Technical Risk – Identification, Mitigation and Prediction*
Presented by: Mr. Ralph Sickinger, BMPCOE software development manager, and Mr. Jorge Cardozo, BMPCOE software development manager.
- *Integrated Predictive Analysis*
Presented by: Mr. Gary Gustafson, Defense Acquisition University chair, and Mr. Dave James, DCMA Headquarters.
- *Engineering Roles and Competencies*
Presented by: Mr. Tom Solosky and Mr. Ramu Pillai, both of DCMA Headquarters.
- *KM/CoP*
Presented by: Dr. Moonja Kim, DCMA Headquarters, and Mr. Ed Clavette, DCMA District East.

The conference attendees were not limited to program support personnel and engineers — a number of quality managers were represented as well. Mr. Kessler deemed the conference a great success, stating, “We were able to gather a wealth of expertise and marry multiple disciplines [with]...the integration of some quality issues.”